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Chief, Plans and Policy Staff

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28 March 1949

Chief, Staff Intelligence Group

Intelligence Production Requirements

Reference: S/PP Memorandum of 14 March 1949 on Intelligence Production Requirements

Enclosure: Draft Guidance Paper for the Programming of Intelligence Production

1. The object of S/PP's Memorandum of 14 March is highly commendable, and it reflects the great need for guidance in the productive work of CIA. This Group does not, however, agree that the answer suggested in this memorandum is the right one, nor that the procedure set forth will achieve the desired results.

2. The memorandum calls for the producing components of ORE to list specific intelligence production requirements, which will then be coordinated and circulated to government policy and planning agencies for their recommendations. In our opinion, this is going at the problem backwards. If CIA is to get the guidance it needs, that guidance must come initially from those same planning and policy agencies.

3. The memorandum calls for specific requirements. On the basis of our experience with quarterly production plans, it is not possible to foresee intelligence requirements, for purposes of production planning, beyond a three-month period, let alone for a longer time. While there may be some requirements which can in a general way be foreseen, these are in the nature of intelligence objectives rather than intelligence production requirements.

4. The task which S/PP has initiated for itself in this memorandum will be a long and exhausting one, of which the end result will have scant value. The lists submitted by the producing components will necessarily be hastily compiled, and, if past experience of a year ago is any guide, will consist largely of items of apparent immediate importance in the current period. These lists must then be coordinated, approved in final form by the IPB, circulated outside CIA, and finally returned as the basis for preparing the CIA Intelligence Production Plan and for guiding field collections. In our opinion, this will hardly have been accomplished before January 1950, which means the final result will necessarily reflect intelligence requirements of nine months before.

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2. The present system of bringing production into adjustment with needs is through the expedient of fulfilling specific requests for finished intelligence. This method is neither adequate nor systematic, and should be supplemented. There are several means by which this can be improved.

a. The initiation of intelligence studies within ORE on the basis of objective study and anticipation of need. This function, insofar as it relates to specific subjects, is now being developed by G/SI.

b. The establishment and maintenance of effective and continuing liaison between the organ of ORE responsible for the initiation of intelligence projects and the principal users of national intelligence, so as to bring out actual needs. If properly exploited, this could be the most significant guide to intelligence production.

c. The enhancement of ORE's ability to produce high quality intelligence in response to spot requests which have not been anticipated. This involves

(1) Filling gaps in information and material on file in CIA;

(2) Continual improvement and correction of materials presently on file;

(3) Establishment of agreed criteria of information collection and maintenance among the several intelligence agencies, (e.g., statistical standards, units of measure) and a clear demarcation of their share in the production of finished intelligence.

3. A much needed job is getting the producing components to survey their informational holdings in terms of point 2 c above, and then to plan a program of intelligence collection and a program for the production of working papers which would enable ORE to meet speedily and effectively the priority requests made upon it. The combination of an ability to produce high quality reports on short notice and to guide general production on the basis of current knowledge of what the principal users of national intelligence want, would produce an unexceptionable intelligence service.

4. As to the programming for production, G/SI wishes to reiterate what we have stated many times: There is no over-all programming function beyond the most general one of deciding whether or not to have the NIS, the Daily and Weekly Summaries, and the general form staff estimates should take. These determinations have been made already so that the present function is one of periodic review. This leaves left undone, or done

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unsatisfactorily, the programming of staff intelligence. Our views as to how this should be done have previously been submitted, but there is herewith attached a draft procedure which was prepared prior to the establishment of the IPB. With slight modification to allow for the present functions of the IPB, it is still our opinion that the approach outlined in this draft is much to be preferred if the objective is to get something done at an early date.



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